

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Durham and Northumbria put merger talks on hold

Due to the Government's proposals to reform policing, Durham and Northumbria Police Authorities have taken the joint decision to put statutory merger talks on hold.

Both Forces, however, will continue to seek out new opportunities and ways in which they can collaborate and share services in order to provide more efficient policing in Durham and Northumbria.

The decision was taken because of the proposals outlined in the 'Policing in the 21st Century: Reconnecting the police and the people' consultation paper published by the Home Office. The paper included proposals to introduce Police and Crime Commissioners, meaning that the Police Authorities could be abolished. With this uncertainty both Durham and Northumbria considered it would be inappropriate to continue statutory merger talks at this time.

Mr Peter Thompson, Chairman of Durham Police Authority said: "When we started merger talks earlier this year policing was very different. The Government is proposing abolishing Police Authorities by May 2012. With everything that is happening, and the changes taking place, it seems inappropriate to continue to look at a statutory merger."

Councillor Mick Henry, Chair of Northumbria Police Authority said: "Merger talks were right at the time but now we need to refocus our thinking. Both Forces will still seek out ways to work together and share services, but we will not be pursuing the idea of a statutory merger. If plans to introduce Police and Crime Commissioners change, then of course, both Authorities can review this decision."

Ends (01.10.10) For further information please contact April Shelley, Communications Officer at Northumbria Police Authority, on 0191 433 2091 or email aprilshelley@gateshead.gov.uk